

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Official Action dated March 7, 2006. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due consideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 6 and 12 are under consideration in this application. Claims 2-5 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 12 is being amended, as set forth in the above marked-up presentation of the claim amendments, in order to more particularly define and distinctly claim applicant's invention.

All the amendments to the claims are supported by the specification. Applicant hereby submits that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Formality Rejection

The Examiner objected to claim 3 for informalities, and has requested correction thereof. As indicated, claim 3 is being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, the outstanding informality rejection thus becomes moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 6 was allowed, and claim 12 would be allowed if it is rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims.

As claim 12 is being corrected as suggested by the Examiner and rewritten into independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, it is in condition for allowance.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 2-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 6,710,818 to Kasahara et al. (hereinafter "Kasahara").

As claims 2-5 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, the relevant rejection thus becomes moot.

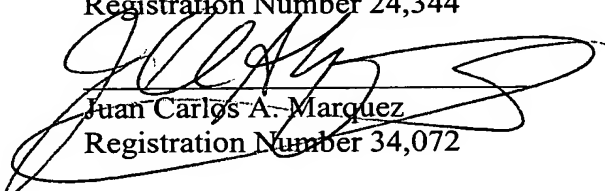
Conclusion

In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art reference upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely, Applicants respectfully contend that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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